

REMARKS

By the present amendment, claims 1 and 15 have been amended to reformulate the recitation of absorption peaks A and B, and claims 18-20 have been added. Support for claims 18-20 is found in the original application, in particular from page 4, line 15 to page 5, line 8.

Claims 1-20 are pending in the present application. Independent claims 1 and 15, and claims 8-14 and 16-17, respectively dependent thereon directly or indirectly, are directed to a polarizing film. Claims 2-6 are directed to a polarizing plate and are dependent directly or indirectly on claim 1. Claim 7 is directed to a liquid crystal display having the polarizing plate of claim 2. Independent claim 18, and claims 19-20 dependent directly or indirectly thereon, are directed to a method of manufacturing a polarizing film.

In the Office Action, claims 1-2, 7, and 10-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over US 5,087,985 (Kitaura) in view of JP 40-1078236 (Okada), and claims 3-6, 8-9, and 12-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Kitaura in view of Okada, further in view of US 6,033,743 (Suzuki). It is alleged in the Office Action that Kitaura discloses a polarizer having very uniform absorbance properties in the visible range and containing inorganic transparent particles such as silica, that Okada discloses the crossed Nicol configuration, and that Suzuki discloses the additional layers.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested. The presently claimed invention has the following features when the film is arranged in cross-Nicol, as recited in present claim 1:

- the absorption peak A is in the range of from 550 to 650 nm and the absorption peak B is in the range of from 450 to 520 nm; and
- the relation (absorption peak A/absorption peak B) of no more than 1.5 is satisfied.

It is submitted that Kitaura completely fails to teach or suggest these features.

Specifically, the graph on Figure 1 of Kitaura shows a portion that looks apparently like an absorption peak A in the range of from 550 to 650 nm, but there is no absorption peak B in the range of from 450 to 520 nm. In the graph on Figure 2 of Kitaura, there is neither an absorption peak A nor an absorption peak B. Therefore, not only the absorption peaks, but also the absorbance ratio as recited in the present claims cannot be defined for the polarizer of Kitaura, so that Kitaura fails to teach both of the above features of the presently claimed invention.

In addition, the figures of Kitaura show absorbance of a polarizing film alone. There is no indication regarding absorption of a polarizing film arranged in cross-Nicol.

In order to confirm these observations on Kitaura, Applicants submit a Declaration under Rule 1.132 by Seiichi Kusumoto, who is the first named inventor in the present application. In the Declaration, Mr. Kusumoto reports that he experimentally prepared a polarizing film in accordance with Example 2 of Kitaura and measured its absorbance in the same conditions as in the examples of the present application. Mr. Kusumoto reports in the Declaration that no absorption peak A was recognized. In other words, in the experimental polarizer according to Kitaura, only one peak is somewhat recognizable in the visible range, as is clearly visible on Fig. 1 on page 3 of the Declaration.

Further, Mr. Kusumoto reports that he experimentally evaluated the optical properties of the polarizer of Kitaura and found them "much worse" than those of the polarizers according to the presently claimed invention. In particular, the black display index resulted in a failure of the polarizer of Kitaura, as is reported in the Table on page 3 of the Declaration. In contrast, the polarizing film in accordance with the presently claimed invention exhibited excellent optical properties.

In summary, Kitaura completely fails to teach or suggest the features recited in the present claims and their advantages, and the other cited references fail to correct these deficiencies of Kitaura. Therefore, the present claims are not obvious over Kitaura and the other cited references taken alone or in any combination.

In addition, with respect to claims 18-20, it is submitted that Kitaura uses a dry stretching method, wherein immersion in a dyeing bath and crosslinking bath are conducted after stretching. Further, Kitaura is completely silent as to controlling the retardation while conducting a stretching operation. Therefore, claims 18-20 are not obvious over Kitaura and the other references taken alone or in any combination.

In conclusion, the invention as presently claimed is patentable. It is believed that the claims are in allowable condition and a notice to that effect is earnestly requested.

In the event there is, in the Examiner's opinion, any outstanding issue and such issue may be resolved by means of a telephone interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Serial Number: 10/068,094

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In the event this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicants hereby petition for an appropriate extension of the response period. Please charge the fee for such extension and any other fees which may be required to our Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

ARMSTRONG, WESTERMAN & HATTORI, LLP

By: Nicolas Seckel
Nicolas E. Seckel
Attorney for Applicants
Reg. No. 44,373

Atty. Docket No. 020619

Suite 1000
1725 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006
Tel: (202) 659-2930
Fax: (202) 887-0357

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Encls.: Declaration under Rule 1.132
Petition for Three-Month Extension of Time